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ABSTRACT

A study examined the governing system in two Florida community colleges in order to better understand the dynamics of policymaking and policy implementation at the two-year college. The study focused on institutional characteristics, specifically communication, and how this may affect state-mandated program implementation. It was found that the communication at Urban Community College reflected the political ramifications of a power struggle between the administration and the faculty union. Administrative efforts to control and manipulate internal communication were matched by union efforts to involve external constituencies, including state officials, in the struggle. Administrators gathered and shared information informally and any attempt to control communication created a high level conflict, thus interrupting the vertical flow of information. Communication at Metropolitan Community College was loosely connected. Formal channels were available but they were not used to move important information or to make key decisions. The use of "trial balloons" and informal negotiation of key issues was commonplace. It was found that neither institution followed clear, well-articulated paths of communication. Emphasis was on appearance of compliance rather than analysis of program performance. Contains 90 references. (GLR)

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The Implementation of State-Mandated Program Review: A Case Study of Governance and Decision Making in Community Colleges

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ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Red Lion-Jantzen Beach in Portland, Oregon, November 1-4, 1990. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

President Myers advanced to the podium and placed a large stack of folders squarely on the top for full effect. After the usual greetings he turned to the topic at hand, flexible faculty contracts, about which a debate had been raging at the college for several years. Gesturing to the oversized pile of folders and papers the president quipped, "On this subject, more has been written than is known."[1]

While Dr. Myers was addressing an internal institutional matter, he could just as easily have been introducing the topic of governance and decision making in community colleges. Numerous books and articles have appeared over the past decades ostensibly discussing and describing this important topic. Upon closer observation, however, one finds that much of what has been written lacks analytical clarity, uncritically carries forward the misperceptions of the past, or simply misidentifies the predominant governance characteristics of these colleges.

Community colleges have traditionally been described as bureaucratically governed institutions (Richardson, 1975; Bensimon, 1984; Reyes and Twombly, 1987). This perception is widely shared by scholars and practitioners alike. Whether the focus is on structure or the decision-making process, the analysis is much the same. Two-year colleges are characterized as hierarchical, top down institutions, with a strong managerial emphasis in their leadership (Thornton, 1960; Miller, 1977; Evans and Neagley, 1973; Monroe, 1980; Burroni, 1976; Zoglin, 1977; Medsker, 1960).

There are three problems associated with this generalized perception of community college governance. First, the bureaucratic label as it is used in this literature lacks

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[1]Fictional names have been created for all respondents and institutions. Use of masculine and feminine pronouns does not necessarily represent the gender of each respondent.

analytical clarity. The term, when used in the two-year setting, has taken on multiple, sometimes even conflicting meanings. There are, for example, numerous instances in the literature where the terms autocratic and bureaucratic are used interchangeably (Vaughan, 1986). Second, much of what has been written on community colleges is based on secondary research and thus uncritically carries forward the presumptions of the past (Cohen and Brawer, 1982). Third, some conditions identified (e.g., politicization) run counter to the bureaucratic model.

Vaughan (1986) exemplifies the lack of analytical clarity. In his recent study of the community college presidency Vaughan indicated that the predominant approach to two-year college governance is driven by a secondary school model with the president enshrined at the top. While suggesting that changes in the bureaucratic image have occurred and that faculty on occasion take a larger role in governance, he concluded that "the historical development of the community college has contributed to the image, and in some cases the reality, of the autocratic president" (Vaughan, 1986, pp. 88-89).

Problems associated with the secondary research emphasis cut across most community college literature. Vaughan's study, for example, is based on previously published work and one broad survey of community college leaders. Cohen and Brawer have done extensive primary work in the field, but their text, *The American Community College*, is based on secondary literature. Recent primary works by Clark (1987) and Reyes and Twombly (1987) notwithstanding, the literature on community colleges is overwhelmingly secondary in nature (Vaughan, 1986; Cohen and Brawer, 1982; Clark, 1987; Reyes and Twombly, 1987).

Moreover, even these recent primary works present a bureaucratic image of community college governance. Clark (1987), for example, suggests that the status hierarchy in American higher education corresponds to a continuum in authority

environments running from research universities, where the power of professionals is considerable, to community colleges, which exhibit an authority environment that is highly bureaucratic and managerial in nature. While research university faculty retain a great deal of power through a satisfactory accommodation between professional and organizational authority, community college faculty experience "more administrative dominance and even autocracy" (Clark, 1987, p. 161). Finally, Reyes and Twombly (1987, p. 8), despite their claims that community colleges "are organized around [a] political-bureaucratic model," still suggest that two-year colleges "exhibit strong bureaucratic tendencies." Vaughan exemplifies the somewhat contradictory nature of this literature when he stresses the bureaucratic heritage of these institutions while simultaneously suggesting movement toward a collegial bureaucracy with political overtones (Vaughan, 1986, pp. 2-3).

The literature on community college governance, then, lacks definitional clarity. It is, at best, inconsistent—at worst, inaccurate. Perhaps due to the popular use of the term and the negative connotations it has absorbed, bureaucracy has come to mean anything managerial. Thus, one finds autocracy used as a virtual synonym for community college bureaucracy when the two are not equivalent terms. Additionally, in efforts to describe participatory governance, anything that falls short of collegiality, such as collective bargaining, also becomes bureaucratic. The definitional looseness associated with bureaucracy in the literature reinforces the basic need for both a scholarly study and an accurate depiction of community college governance.

STATE LEVEL

The importance of these shortcomings is magnified by the recent expansion of state system involvement into the operational affairs of local institutions. State level coordination

and the success of state policy initiatives is to a great extent reliant upon successful local implementation. It is, therefore, important that state agencies have a clear sense of the organizations in which the policy will be implemented. If, as appears to be the case in the two-year sector, there is an inaccurate appraisal of local college governance and decision-making dynamics, then state policy implementation may well become highly problematic.

While organizational literature offers several lenses through which to view educational institutions, there has been scant attention given to the relationship between these institutions and the larger state systems of which they are a part. This oversight, particularly notable in the area of institutional implementation of state policy, could be overcome by integrating the policy implementation literature that roughly corresponds with organizational perspectives, thus creating a larger and sharper lens through which to view and analyze system and institution level governance dynamics. Linking various models of implementation—programmed, adaptive, and evolutionary—with various models of organizations—bureaucratic, political, and organized anarchy—provides such an analytical framework (Fullan, 1981; Berman, 1978, 1980; Wildavsky and Majone, 1978; Beyer, Stevens, and Trice, 1983). By utilizing this framework to trace the implementation of state level policy through the organization, we can more fully understand the governance and decision-making dynamics at both the state and organizational levels.

FRAMEWORK

A hybrid version of two frameworks introduced by William Firestone and Robert Herriott (1981, 1982) has been utilized to analyze the dominant governance characteristics (Figure 1). While Firestone and Herriott's analyses of secondary and elementary education governance "images" have provided valuable insights into the institutional dynamics and the resulting abilities and limitations inherent in the dominant models, it was necessary to

modify some of their organizational dimensions to accommodate the two-year sector. Dimensions such as teacher classroom autonomy and coordination of instruction which are more appropriate to the secondary level have been eliminated. Measurements of influence have given way to considerations of power, decision making, and communication patterns. These alterations provide a framework more suitable to qualitative research in general and to case studies in particular by allowing a continuum for analysis rather than taking a strict dichotomous view. Finally, the framework combines Firestone and Herriott's use of these governance models with the parallel implementation strategies mentioned above.

Applying their approach to a community college system will provide a sharper focus on the dynamics of policy making and policy implementation at the two-year level. The result is a clear delineation of institutional governance and the opportunity for a better match between state level policy initiatives and institutional implementation (Firestone and Herriott, 1981, 1982).

METHODOLOGY

A case study design was employed to investigate the implementation of state-mandated program review in two community colleges within the state of Florida. The field study method allowed for an intensive examination of institutional and system interplay as it relates to governance and policy implementation and provided a better sense of the actual substance of each case. This method also provided for a "thick description" which is considered crucial for a qualitative study (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). The qualitative approach provided data that "are a source of well grounded, rich description and explanation of processes occurring in local contexts" (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 21).

The selection of a single state enabled the study to focus simultaneously on the state and local dynamics within a single system. Florida has both a well-developed community

Organizational Dimension	Rational Bureaucracy/Programmed	Political/Adaptive	Anarchy/Evolutionary
Goals	One set of clear goals which guide internal activity.	Varying numbers of groups in and out of the institution advocate their own interests.	Goals are unclear. Irrelevant for internal activity but adopted for external legitimation.
Source of Power	Formal authority and persuasive skill vested in top level administrators.	Multiple, including formal authority, persuasive and technical skill based authority, task based dependencies, and external support.	Diffused. Fluid participation and external influence limit formal authority.
Decision Making	Rational, problem-solving logic.	Negotiation structured by authoritative decision structure.	Garbage can process.
Level of Conflict	Low due to rational approach and clear goals.	Fluctuating but occasionally high.	Multiple subunit agendas function independently resulting in low conflict.
Formal Rules	Written, formal rules. Compliance is expected, rules are monitored.	Rules exist but compliance is negotiated. Compromise necessary to reduce conflict.	Compliance with rules is voluntary. Administrators give advice. Rules (i.e., evaluation) exist for external legitimation.
Environment	Low impact. Channeled through top administrators.	Fluctuating, but occasionally high. Somewhat channeled, but groups seek external support, ideas, and funds.	High and direct.
Communication	Flows vertically. Information, data move up and decisions, directives move down.	Disjointed, inconsistent vertical process interrupted by interest groups inside and outside.	Non-vertical. Independent decision points within organization create multiple, loosely connected communication lines.

Figure 1. Hypothetical Differences Between Three Images of Community Colleges on Seven Organizational Dimensions.

college system and a state level program review policy, thus offering an appropriate blend of state system involvement and local institutional governance. The state, for example, provides over 70 percent of the operating funds for the public two-year institutions. The institutions have no local taxing authority and, thus, are dependent on student tuition and state appropriations. A state-mandated numbering system dominates the curriculum process, and a state-wide test (CLAST) monitors the educational progress of "rising sophomores." Local boards of trustees are appointed by the governor, but represent local district residents. Within this overall state framework, local two-year institutions manage their own governance and decision-making processes.

To increase the breadth of analysis and its potential utility, the study was a comparison of two institutional cases. Urban Community College and Metropolitan Community College were selected because of their similarities in size and complexity. Each is a large, multi-campus college with enrollments in excess of 10,000 students.

In order to conduct an analysis of system-wide and institutional dynamics as they shape the formulation and implementation of an externally mandated program review policy, it was necessary to conduct field research at state offices and at both community colleges.

The first portion of the study involved the acquisition and analysis of documents at the state and institution level. The initial document analysis focused on the historical record relative to the introduction and passage of legislation, establishment of state committees, and issuance of board directives at the state level. Parallel analysis at each institution provided an historical context for the particular events which were the focus of the study. This analysis concentrated on interoffice memoranda, board agendas, committee minutes, and legislative testimony.

At the institution level the initial focus was on the organization and structure as well as the history of each college. Materials reviewed included accreditation reports, institutional histories, master plans, reorganization documents, and assorted in-house documents.

The next research stage involved collection and review of state level and college documents on program review. This material included committee minutes, institution and state reports, board minutes and agendas, accreditation reports, college newspapers, and interoffice memoranda.

Interviews with key state and college respondents were also conducted at this stage. Initial document analyses provided useful information relative to these interviewees. While many of the interviewees were already identified (e.g., college presidents, vice presidents, provosts, board members, state board staff, faculty presidents, directors of institutional research), numerous others emerged from the document analyses, such as individuals at each institution who had significant involvement in program review (e.g., faculty, program directors, review committee members). The number of interviews at each institution did not allow everyone associated with program review to be interviewed. Those most closely associated with program review, key administrators, and those individuals who were identified from the inquiry itself were interviewed.

The interviews were structured, each lasting approximately one hour, and questions were tied to the seven organizational dimensions within the framework. Interviews and documents were coded using thematic and rhetorical analysis tied to the framework. Coding was accomplished through the identification of terms, phrases, figures of speech, characterizations, concepts, metaphors and analogies, as well as feelings and value-charged language.

SETTING

The state of Florida, which established a public two-year system in 1957, provided an excellent setting for this study. The 1983 Master Plan for the State Community College System established a comprehensive and coordinated system of 28 colleges. As originally conceived and developed, the system provides a mix of state and local control. The result has been local college governance within a broader state framework (Division of Community Colleges, 1977, 1985).

Florida's two-year system is of national significance and prominence in terms of its size and system-wide innovation. The state currently ranks as the fifth largest public two-year system. By the end of the century, the state will have increased its population to over 17,000,000 residents, an increase in excess of 20 percent during the next decade. Additionally, Florida's articulation policy, its development of upper division universities, and its system-wide testing (CLAST) process place it at the forefront of community college development (Savage, 1987; El-Khawas, Carter, and Ottinger, 1988; Cohen and Brawer, 1982).

Among the many state level policy initiatives undertaken in Florida during the last decade, academic program review stands as one of the most important. Program review has been an issue of concern within the higher education community for decades. Often seen as a subset of a more pervasive system of institutional evaluation, program review has taken on greater significance with the growth of state system involvement and the shift of review intent from a formative or program modification perspective to "more comprehensive, summative judgments about quality, productivity, and effectiveness" and ultimately to program elimination (Hines, 1988, p. 101).

Florida's formal involvement in program review commenced in 1982 when the State Board of Community Colleges began the implementation of a state review policy enacted by

the legislature the previous year. This policy mandated that the state board develop procedures to ensure that all 28 community colleges conduct a review of their instructional programs.

Program review, then, provides an excellent opportunity to analyze both the complexity of state policy implementation at the local institutional level as well as the internal governance and decision-making characteristics of these colleges.

However, for purposes of this paper we will not focus on the state level, but instead on institutional characteristics, specifically communication. As one of the seven dimensions of the framework, communication provides significant insight into the three governance models while simultaneously testing the value of the framework.

URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Communication patterns at Urban Community College reflect several characteristics which, when taken together, demonstrate the complex and hybrid nature of college governance. At the surface communication appears to follow clear, bureaucratic patterns. Faculty and administrators speak of the chain of command and the flow of information upward and the movement of decision making back down the organization. The college response to program review exhibits equally bureaucratic characteristics at the surface. Heavy reliance on rules and regulations and the adherence to rigid time lines suggest a bureaucracy. Yet beneath this bureaucratic image college communication networks and patterns exhibit a far more complex environment in which political and anarchic forces are at work.

From a structural perspective, the college has established formal, traditional lines of communication. To the casual observer these linkages are firmly in place and used on a routine basis. Faculty and administrators reference this system, noting that the college has a formal chain of command for communication and decision making. Parallel to this formal structure is the appearance of an open, participatory communication system as advocated by the president. President Baker takes great pride in what he terms an open, responsive management style. He refers often to the opportunity for faculty and students to walk into his office and engage in substantive dialogue on issues which are of interest or importance to them. He mentions with pride his preference for management by walking around and his informative give-and-take sessions with faculty called "Coffee with Al."

Beneath this formal, open facade exists a less formal, less open, less responsive system of communication. Here the process is informal and personal. Access and influence are neither position based nor are they the result of open, unfettered dialogue. Experience with the organization is more important than position. Whom you know and what you know are more important than title.

The implementation of program review evidences some of the same patterns. The implementation process demonstrates both the formal and the underlying informal communication and decision structures. Communication with the state is formal. Forms are completed and filed in a timely manner. Reviews are conducted and the results are filed with the Board of Trustees. Communication internally, however, is much less formal and much less effective reflecting the loosely connected aspects of the college. Awareness of program review is uneven at best, as is the implementation of the process. Bureaucratic appearances belie the more symbolic "credentialing" aspect of program review.

The communication networks which emerge from the college reflect less the formal organizational protocol and more the day-to-day reality of organizational dynamics. Communication, in part, reflects the institution, its history, and its traditions.

Tradition at Urban Community College is important. The college is one of the state's older two-year institutions. The college has only had three presidents in its long history and employees tend to stay with the college for years. It is not uncommon to find 15- and 20-year employees at all levels of the organization.

Tradition, however, has been overridden in recent years by the emergence of unionization. Today communication is dominated by the conflict which exists between the faculty union and the college as personified by the administration. Much of what is said and done in regard to communication at Urban relates directly to an ongoing power struggle between these two forces.

The early years of unionization were bitter. When the faculty organized in the late 1970s, it was over the vigorous opposition of the college president. The president, who had for years served as head of the faculty senate, was so personally affronted by the decision that he abolished the senate, a division that remains unchanged to this day. When a new president was hired, his personal and personable approach did not win over the faculty. Efforts by some faculty to decertify the union only bred greater resentment and drove a larger wedge between faculty and administration. Union organized evaluations of the college administration and Board of Trustees in the early 1980s led to faculty suspensions and an eight-year court fight which was only recently settled. Overt hostility between the two sides has declined in recent years, but the court decision served as a clear reminder of the tenuous nature of that relationship. As Urban Community College enters the 1990s, this union-administration conflict continues to dominate the internal college environment.

Communication patterns at Urban are complex and sometimes confusing. The contradictory nature of these mixed messages, such as the difference between the formal and informal communication systems, causes confusion within the organization. The president, for example, repeatedly refers to the open door. He says he wants to be a facilitator, and believes in and adheres to a participatory management style. Yet the infrastructure necessary to allow for and support effective participation is missing from the institution. The faculty senate has never been re-established, union-management relations are poor, and any attempt to foster broad communication is largely undermined by the systematic denial of faculty access to the college phone system.

As a result, a highly personalized communication system has been developed by college employees at all levels. Without an integrated, effective, and efficient formal communication system, college employees from provost to faculty have learned to rely on

the informal structure. The existence of these parallel systems creates a variety of problems. The symptoms are noticeable in the confusion over access to the president. Senior administrators as well as middle managers are aware of the chain of command as well as the open door. Both systems are available although the administrators tend to use the chain of command. Sam Ellis, Alta Campus dean, points out that the protocol associated with bringing issues to the president is "a very mixed protocol."

> People circumvent the whole structure once in a while and take a pet thing that they really want . . . I'm not really sure it's their fault as much as his fault because he wouldn't have to entertain that kind of thing, but he does, because he's a yes man. He really is a yes man. He doesn't want to say no to anybody, and he'll say yes every time he can. . . . As our president he really doesn't like to tell you, you can't do something.

Ralph Cummings, Hub Campus division head, is also aware that the open door is preferred by the president, while the chain of command is the choice of the vice presidents and provosts. Since the president seems inclined to respond affirmatively to personal appeals, his senior staff strongly encourages the chain of command as a method of damage control.

> Dr. Wilson, I think, likes the chain of command. She knows that you have not told your dean of instruction, she will not want you to speak with you. So she tries to help the president, because the president wants everyone to like him and to say that he has an open door, but all of his vice presidents have been trained to say, "Come through the chain of command."

Faculty are aware of the dual protocol. Some take the president at his word and feel they can "just give him a call. That's what he says. Coffee with Al. Anytime." Others are convinced it's the chain of command. Daniel Patrick, a faculty member, says, "It's definitely the chain—I've been taught the organizational chart and go through the chain of command." A colleague who basically agrees also notes, however, that there are "no consequences . . . except for a lot of hurt feelings and a lot of denial" if you do violate the

chain. Others who try to make sense out of the system look at it historically. Diana Moore, a faculty member on the Hub Campus, notes that

> it's kind of a paradoxical situation. Dr. Baker, when he first became president, was emphasizing the open door policy. "You're all my family; come and see me anytime. Anytime you have a problem, come and see me." In the past few years we've gotten an entirely different kind of protocol, and now it basically a military chain of command type of situation. [However] if you go through the chain of command, [he] tends to be very inaccessible. My impression is that he makes very few decisions that come through the chain of command. By the time it gets to him, somebody else has already made the decision. I think most of the time he really doesn't know. He's sort of an absentee landlord.

The result is a strong reliance on the informal structure for effective communication. Throughout the college, administrators and faculty rely on personal contact, the grapevine, and the "good ol' boy" network. William Matthews, Alta Campus provost, for example, relies heavily on personal contact. He has been at the college for 18 years and, thus, knows where to go and whom to see when he wants something done. Frank Tucker, Wetlands Campus dean, recognizes that the telephone system is inadequate, the mail system slow, and the distance between campuses prohibitive. Therefore, "the informal structure is pretty much what I use and try to do as much in person as possible although I still prefer writing." Dr. Tucker has also found the grapevine useful. Urban has an

> informal grapevine kind of rumor-mongering system that institutions tend to have, and that's used to a great extent. I think it certainly has sustained the institution for a long period of time, and I would think there may be some value in it.

Sam Ellis, having been at the institution for many years, relies on the "good ol' boy system."

> I've been here so long and I know just about everybody; it sometimes is a little easier for me if I call. . . . It's more convenient. . . . I think it makes a difference in how long you've been at a place and how well you know people and all that.

He recognizes that it is easier for him to communicate effectively "than it would be for somebody who was new."

Dr. Tucker's ability to function effectively as a decision maker on his campus is affected by his understanding of the organizational structure. The complex nature of that structure, in which district personnel serve simultaneously as district (staff) and campus (line) administrators, often translates poorly to the campuses.

> It is a situation that's multi-layered. There is a complicated process of getting and sharing accurate information because of the layering. . . . The president and his four vice presidents who are staff people technically, exist as line supervisors for one of the campuses, and yet they are staff to the others of us, and that's a very unusual setup. . . . This is kind of "have my cake and eat it, too. We're staff and we're line," which I think puts tremendous pressure, in my judgment, on the vice presidents. . . . So by comparison it is multi-layered and it is because of the multi-layer and because of the dual roles, I think it's convoluted and difficult, because as you can see, these poor people don't know which hat they have to wear to answer the question, and those of us who are on the satellite areas don't know when we're autonomous and when we're not. We're supposed to know that but they keep moving the target, so you really have no idea.

The unclear lines of authority which are described by Dr. Tucker place great reliance on personal knowledge and skill. It suggests that individual ability to negotiate the system may be at a premium. On Hub Campus, the most complex of the three campuses, this is precisely the case. Dr. David Fischer, the campus dean, suggests that his ability to deal effectively in the organization and obtain the desired result comes from personal knowledge.

> I have been here a few years. I know how the system works, I know where the dotted lines are, I know where the straight lines are, and so if I need assistance from a "provost-type" . . . I know who to go see. And I've worked with them long enough that I know what button I need to push.

Dean Ellis has much the same perspective. He has been at Urban for 25 years and knows the system and the people. He knows whom to call for advice or assistance if he needs something done or a certain decision made.

> I just don't think that it quite goes by those models that you go from here to there and here to there. It just kind of goes. And sometimes people jump spots, and I think that's all right, even, at times.
> But right now, I think we sometimes go around the wagons. . . . I'd say that we're just a little bit loose in our structure.

Two additional items which reflect both the formal and informal aspects of communication and the conflictual nature of the organization are the president's regular "Coffees with Al" and the unique college phone system. During his tenure as president, Dr. Baker has utilized a structured but informal method of access and dialogue called "Coffee with Al." As he explains it,

> My "Coffees with Al" are held with the faculty several times a year. I do it on all four campuses. The meeting is strictly for the faculty to air their spleens or to vent their spleens or to ask questions about things that they don't know about, to preach a sermon—whatever it is they want with the president. "Coffees with Al" are a no-holds-barred session.

These meetings are held with not more than 15 people and include a wide variety of constituencies. The faculty have a mixed reaction to them. Some view them in much the same way as the president, an open forum to share concerns, raise issues, and seek solutions to problems. Interestingly, those who recall them with positive feelings either believe they are no longer held or that they occur perhaps once a year. Ramon Gutierrez recalls that the president hosts these coffees "I think it's once a year." Barry Jones believes they no longer occur: "He used to do something called 'Coffees with Al,' a very informal rap session, and he stopped doing those a few years ago."

Those faculty who have a less sanguine view of these forums suggest that they are not open, but controlled and manipulated. One faculty member who no longer is invited to "Coffee with Al" suggests,

> I understand the concept is sort of like trying to make sure the organization's open, but you get the feeling that it's really a waste of time, because either he doesn't know what's going on or he is probably not going to be able to do anything about it anyway.
> It's almost like you wonder if he's sort of like a Ronald Reagan type executive attitude. He's not really totally involved. I like Dr. Baker; I think he's a wonderful guy, but sometimes it's very frustrating. You don't know whether he really knows what's going on.

A Wetlands Campus faculty member who has known the president for years and feels free to call on him when necessary suggests that "Coffees with Al" are "supposedly an open forum. But I think most people who are thinking people would hesitate to bring out any real serious problem in an open forum like that."

Dr. Roland Epperson, who has been to many such meetings in his years at the college, recalls that

> he always promoted them as being very informal, just come and have coffee with me and get anything off your chest you want to talk about. It's like he always talks about his door being open; you want to walk in, you know? But they never turn out that way. His very presence is intimidating to people. He usually spends the first three-quarters of the hour just talking himself.
> It's as though you're a captive audience, and the atmosphere he generates is not one where people feel like, "Well, let's just take our shoes off and choose a bat," which is what he says he wants.
> I've been one of the very few that I've heard ever speak up and ask a question. Most just sit there and nod their heads.

The existence of a faculty union plays a major role in the college communication pattern. President Baker seems personally offended by the existence of the union and often meets privately with faculty who have joined the union to inquire about their motivation in joining. He persists in this behavior despite constant complaints from the union leadership.

As a result of concerns about the union and its impact on the college the administration takes great pains to control information. Nowhere is the desire to control and manipulate information more blatant than in the control over the phone system. Faculty at Urban do not generally have phones in their offices. Most faculty are in single person offices on the three main campuses, but few have a phone within the office itself. Instead, the college maintains message centers within each building. On Hub Campus the phone center may be in the division chair's office area, while on the other campuses a central area for mail and phones has been created for the faculty. To many faculty this system is a significant inconvenience at best, and at its worst, a "ritual of humiliation." Diana Moore has been at Urban Community College for sixteen years. She has the rank of assistant professor. She serves on the curriculum committee and has been active in a variety of areas over her tenure at the college. As a result of a special project she was finally allowed a phone. She has had it for two months.

> I still can't hardly deal with the idea that I actually have my own telephone. It's a ritual of humiliation. It's like there's no rational reason for people not to have telephones in their offices, but it's just a reminder that there are limits to what you're going to be able to do. No matter how good you are and how much you need it, you're not going to get it.

Despite the generally recognized need for effective communication at the college due in particular to its multi-site nature, there is strong resistance to phones. Deans on two campuses noted that the communication systems were ineffective and that the message system does not work well. The Alta Campus is forced to rely on its staff to compensate for the ineffective message center. When pressed, the administrative response is lack of funds. Dr. Matthews pinpoints money as the issue, and Roland Epperson agrees. However, the agreement ends there. Matthews avers that to put phones in faculty offices, "it would take the president. If the president said there would be faculty phones, we'd have them tomorrow if there's money. Money's always overriding." Yet even if the Alta

Campus wanted phones and had the money in the campus budget, the decision would be stopped. The provost suggests that even

> if I want to put phones in that office, it's a district decision. You'd have a better chance of getting phones in those offices than I would.

While president of the union, Dr. Epperson often heard the president say that phones would be available if the money was there.

> Dr. Baker has said—we have tried over and over to bargain this issue—and he always says there is not enough money, and he keeps putting it in terms of, "Would you rather have the money in raises or in phones?" It's a lot of bullcrap.

The phone system "takes on kind of a symbolic meaning after a while because it's so irrational." Faculty cannot receive calls from students in their offices, nor can they return them. They must go to the message center to try to make connections with students, doctors, spouses, colleagues, or administrators.

> You have to run down all the way from where your office is to get down there, and you might call them [students] and they're not home, or students call you and leave a message to call them back, and you're constantly trying to get back and forth, and you never get each other. The same thing is definitely true, trying to reach someone else on another campus by phone, particularly faculty members.

As a relatively new administrator at the college, Dr. Tucker finds the telephone situation astounding. "I can neither explain it nor defend it. It's almost ludicrous. In 1990 to be talking about professionals without a phone, why one should have one any more than you should have a chair to sit on, unless you don't need one and stand." Dr. Tucker has heard the standard explanations and has reached his own conclusions:

> I will also give you the party line. The president and his staff will tell you that the reason there are no telephones is because there is no money for telephones. The belief is that there are no phones so that people cannot communicate with one another about and with pertaining to subjects that are not favored by the administration.

College implementation of state-mandated program review also reflects the hybrid nature of the communication patterns found in the college. A formal bureaucratic communication system is in place which allows the college to respond to state regulations. Each year the college files the necessary paperwork verifying which programs will undergo a campus based review. Reports are also completed which indicate that reviews have been completed, recommendations made, and decisions implemented. Underneath this symbolic and bureaucratic reporting structure, however, it is apparent that communication about program review, its intent, and the college process for implementation is severely restricted. Policy and process are loosely connected with emphasis on meeting state reporting mandates rather than on serious review of program performance.

Dr. Tucker, who arrived at Urban after the state policy was in place and the college process well along, suggests that while he has a clear sense of the goals and motivation behind program review this is not clearly communicated across the college.

> I would think a lot of people would tell you that they still don't know what it is and why it occurs. I mean, technically, we know why it occurs because people are trying to get a handle on standardization. Florida's great for that particular philosophy and trying to clean up loose ends and straighten things out, and you have a sense of putting things in greater order. But what we actually do and what we actually contribute, I don't know if we can really put a finger on that. I don't think a lot of people know what it is about . . . what it is and what it does and what it's supposed to do, because I suspect there'd be a gap between those two things.

Daniel Patrick, who has been through the process twice, is one of only a few faculty who seem aware of both the policy and its intent. His experience with it leaves him believing that the reviews are "to make sure we're meeting the state curriculum standards and that we're teaching the students what they say we have to be teaching them." From a goals perspective he is less aware, essentially responding, "I don't really know. I don't remember, to be honest."

While Paula Sherwood has become very involved and very aware of the current college program review implementation process, the involvement and the awareness of others in the institution is minimal. Generally the administrators most directly involved have the greatest knowledge and understanding, while those potentially most directly linked or most directly affected, the faculty, appear to have little direct knowledge or understanding. It appears that the process is not seen as meaningful by faculty. Administrators such as Robert Becker and John Fischer, individuals who are or have been directly involved by virtue of present or past positions in vocational education, know the system and its overall meaning. Beyond them the penetration of the policy, the process and its value to the institution are severely restricted.

On the Alta Campus administrators believe there is an internal process to implement program review. William Matthews is confused about his involvement; he cannot remember if he has received Level I data since he became provost or if he only received it as a dean of instruction. He is confident that Robert Becker has a system for reviews, but he cannot exactly recall. Sam Ellis is equally vague, finally relying on the informal system. He offers that "it's pretty informal, but we've got a system for handling all that."

Wetlands Campus has had similar experiences. Dr. Tucker has very limited experience with program review.

> I am not familiar with such procedures. I would think, again, that they exist, but I don't know them. . . . I plead ignorance again. The vice president for academic affairs, Dr. Wilson, she must have a system, but I don't know what it is. . . . A lot of the times the state-requested information goes right into institutional research, and we on the campus never see it. So I am ignorant of much of this.

Not surprisingly, faculty are generally unaware of the specific details of program review as they relate to the process (e.g., Levels I, II, III). Level I data, which is actually developed from college-based data, reformatted by the state and sent to the colleges

annually, apparently is not shared with program faculty. Whether it is sent to deans and department chairs is unclear, although evidence suggests that it is not provided. If it is, the process is so poorly understood that the data is not recognized as a part of program review. Dr. Tucker simply states, in response to inquiries about Level I data, "I am unable to answer that question."

> I don't have any of that. As I said, I've been here two years. I have never received anything that said, "These are the data." or "These are the recommendations for the data that we will now implement or that you need to look at." She [Dr. Wilson] may have found a mechanism or a system to do this that I am simply not aware of.

Ralph Cummings believes that he does receive the data from either the dean of instruction, the dean of vocational education, or institutional research, "although I find that they're not as quick to send out information. If you ask for it, they will." As to the impact of the data he receives,

> I look at it and say, "Oh, dear." Sometimes I can read it and sometimes I can't. Those that I can read, the information is sometimes frightening to me because it will say—I think that's the one that tells me how many graduates I have, and I'll go, "Oh my God, such few graduates."

The overwhelming response from faculty is that they simply do not see the data and are not quite sure what it is. "I haven't seen any. There may have been some, but I doubt it. Maybe for other areas," represents the views of several faculty. Al Lowenstein mentions that he has no official way to get placement data and another vocational faculty member thinks she's heard of Level I data but, "I don't know that I've ever seen or heard about it specifically." Faculty involved in state-wide organizations suggest that college level data is scarce, and in some instances find that the outside organization provides more data than the college. Roland Epperson suggests that the lack of program review data goes beyond any internal review process.

> No. We don't get it from the college at all. The faculty never get any of that kind of data given to us just impromptu or regularly in any way. Only once in a great while, when Dr. Baker wants to make a point about something, then he will call a special meeting, and then he'll have some data to give us, but usually that's when he's promoting something.

Urban Community College represents mixed or hybrid governance characteristics through its communication patterns. Bureaucratic in structure, but political or anarchic in substance, communication at Urban demonstrates the complexity inherent in the community college setting.

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Metropolitan Community College is currently well into its third decade of existence. Emerging at the height of community college development in the 1960s, it serves a rapidly growing region in one of the country's fastest growing states. While history and tradition may be less significant here than at Urban, the internal governance and decision-making dynamics are no less complex. Communication patterns at Metro reveal many of the same facets identified at Urban. Formal communication patterns appear bureaucratic, both internally and in connection with state level program review. However, internally strong political undercurrents are a central part of the communication networks. The result again is a hybrid model in which college communication reflects at least two of the three organizational models.

Communication networks at Metro are far more complex than the formal organization structure would imply. Three essential methods are used to foster institutional communication. The formal link is the President's Staff. This body includes the six vice president and provost positions. It meets at the behest of the president, and he controls the flow of the meeting. There is no set agenda. The aim is to discuss issues and arrive at consensus among the members. Below the President's Staff there are secondary and tertiary interlinked councils which also are expected to enhance the flow of communication up and down the organization. While the formal link is through these councils to key staff and department chairs and then to the faculty there are also two key informal mechanisms which are central to communication and decision making at the college.

One of the key ingredients in the communication flow at Metropolitan is the faculty senate. Whether it is the president or senior staff or a faculty member talking, they all tend to agree that the senate is an integral part of the communication process at the college. The faculty association has been active at Metropolitan for many years. During the tenure of Dr. Myers' predecessor, the senate was viewed by some as an intermediate step on the way to collective bargaining. Faculty unions are legal in Florida, and several community colleges' faculties are organized. In the early 1980s there was serious administrative concern over the emerging strength of the United Faculty of Florida (UFF) chapter at Metro. When Dr. Myers arrived in the mid 1980s, having come from a unionized environment, he was sensitive to the dynamics of faculty unions. While, as he states, he is not afraid of unions, he clearly positioned himself to reduce the likelihood of unionization at Metro. He realized that communication was a central deterrent to the success of unionization. As a result, President Myers consciously developed a strategy to reduce the countervailing influence of unionization by co-opting the key linkages in the college communication system. This strategy played out in three distinct ways. One was the relationship of the president and the faculty organization. Another was the accessibility and visibility of the president with the faculty at large. The third was the conscious use of informal communication ties with key faculty and staff. This final element was essentially the formalization and utilization of the traditional grapevine.

Campus senate officers join together monthly as the college Faculty Association. The association addresses those issues raised on each campus which are seen as college-wide. This central committee works directly with the president. Each meeting is attended by the president, and issues raised by both sides are dialogued. Minutes are kept and disseminated. The president reviews the draft of the minutes prior to final distribution and retains the right to modify them if he so desires. Dr. Myers views his relationship with the

senate as a communication device. He has created various administrative councils to "force communication," and he addresses the association in much the same way. A Biggs Campus senator who is otherwise very sanguine about the relationship between the president and the association does wonder about his overall influence:

> Sometimes I wonder if he has almost a little bit too much influence that way. For instance, I'm secretary, but it's been a long-standing practice before we disseminate the minutes, he approves them, or he reads them. [He] doesn't want to be misquoted or have a different tone than he wanted it to have.

She has questioned her association colleagues, but they generally feel that

> overall, the good working relationship we have with him and the fact that he's willing to give us so much time and he wants our input is so valuable that it's a beneficial trade-off. And the same thing is true with the provost on each campus.

As part of his overall communication strategy, Dr. Myers has made it a high priority to provide the faculty with those things which seem to be uppermost on their priority list. In doing this, he has, according to Richard Emerson, assistant to the president, taken a bad morale situation and created a more positive environment. Faculty, Dr. Emerson agrees, now believe he has their best interests at heart. Two items stand out as key factors in bringing this about. The first is salary, followed closely by the resolution of a long-standing contract/loading dispute. During the past five years the president has provided substantial faculty raises. This clearly is high on his agenda. Dr. Emerson simply states that "as long as I keep bringing it in he'll spend it." The president's goal, according to Emerson, is to make them the best paid faculty in the state.

An arts and sciences faculty member who has been involved at various levels of the organization puts it more bluntly:

> I sense that one of his major goals is to keep the lid on faculty—not let them get pissed off, not let them get out of control, not let them crank up the union again, that kind of thing. Placate them, satisfy their needs. The best way to do

> that is to tend to them and show them that their input makes a difference.

Dr. Roger Evans goes on to delineate the specific ways in which Dr. Myers has done this. The president, he says, has "dispensed with the sham that faculty have input [in budget], and I think he's been given a lot of credit for not just bullshitting faculty. [Former president] Alyce Winters thought she was doing something participative, and really what she was doing was making everybody mad."

Dr. Myers has replaced the "sham" with faculty association participation in his agenda. These topics include reducing the number of standing committees, revision of the tenure policy, and faculty evaluation. To get them to buy into his agenda, he moved quickly to resolve a long-standing dispute involving the carry-over of load hours from one session to the next. By resolving this one issue, he undercut years of ill will and impressed faculty that he cared. To Dr. Evans, "He saw it as a way to get faculty on his side." Even the president's critics agree that he has successfully used the salary issue to ameliorate faculty concerns.

A former faculty senate leader suggests that the senate's role in decision making is more a chimera than real. "I don't think we have a say, " actually, "it's sort of gesture" on his part. "He doesn't want to make us mad, he wants to have us on his side because he knows and he's absolutely right that without the faculty there would be no Metro."

Sally Maitland, assistant to the Montclair Campus provost, a faculty member and former senate officer, reinforces the notion of presidential attention to faculty interests. Maitland contends that when Dr. Myers came in "short of giving away the store, he was going to do what he needed to do to be successful in working with the faculty." Recognizing the power of an organized faculty, "He has gone to great lengths to see that faculty needs are being addressed." Perhaps the key example is the extended contract

issue. The resolution of that one issue has allowed him to be on "a modified honeymoon with the faculty ever since."

The final ingredient in the president's communication strategy is access to the grapevine. Dick Emerson articulates the strategy very clearly, noting that Myers "dips down wherever he feels like he needs to go." While it is clearly unofficial, it is a routine part of the president's style. Andrew Hughes, a Biggs Campus faculty member, is recognized as a valuable source of information for the president. The new Biggs Campus provost has made it a point to access that source in the "infamous" Building C faculty lounge. Dr. Wessell considers it a "hotbed of gossip," and he makes "a habit of going in there at least once a day. Any administrator who doesn't is kidding themselves." Andrew Hughes affirms his access to the president, indicating that Dr. Myers calls him and comes to see him on campus. "I like to let him know how things are going because I have pretty good connections with the faculty and what's going on on the campus."

In addition to moving down into the organization, President Myers also floats "trial balloons." Emerson again explains that this is the president's way of making a decision. He can gauge the response and allow himself time to scuttle it or adjust it based on the reaction. The president's manipulation of the communication networks has not gone unnoticed. Carl Webster, an arts and science faculty member, says:

> All of a sudden a rumor gets started and you wonder where it got started or planted to see what the reaction to this would be and what people will say. . . . I would rather have them float trial balloons at the hypothetical stage.

The loosely coupled nature of the college communication networks creates an environment in which communication becomes a highly personal art. While they often cite the formal college communication vehicles, the Update, the Bulletin, and minutes of various meetings, more often than not administrators and faculty return to the broader institutional inclination to obtain or disseminate information personally. While the

overarching standard of communication may be personal contact, a critical corollary is that contact need not be hierarchical. In fact, the ability to crisscross the organization is crucial to successful communication.

Clark Reynolds, dean of the South Center, believes there is no one best way to get information out to the college. After a sarcastic reference to communicating "mainly by spreading vicious rumors and things like that," he describes the importance of getting issues into key forums such as the Administrative Council or the President's Staff where they can be discussed, reviewed, and ultimately decided. Reynolds is keenly aware of the importance of key individuals, those who have the president's ear, and he utilizes these common sources at every opportunity. Reynolds' approach reflects the widely held view that the president relies heavily on a close group of advisors [all male] in whom he has confidence and trust. Even within this small group one individual is seen as the most direct link with the president. Notwithstanding his formal position in the organization structure the broadly held view is that he is the single most influential administrator in the college. Inividuals at the college who are familiar with this pattern endeavor to influence events through access to this informal communication link rather than through the formal process. Dr. Reynolds suggests his impact comes through "my communication and my net-working . . . [which] has given me the opportunity to get ideas to people to have some influence."

Campus administrators put real emphasis on direct one-on-one communication. Dr. Longview, Montclair Campus provost, uses various sources to stay informed. He will go directly to department chairs to discuss instructional council issues. Since he is not a member, he feels strongly that he must be aware of issues which are before that forum. He feels the need to obtain information from numerous sources since he's "not ever sure what's important to me until I hear it." The same approach applies to faculty association

officers and the faculty in general. His emphasis on this personal approach comes from his desire to "hear information and hear it as it's being given, not as it's reflected in minutes, because there's a vast difference."

At the departmental level much the same logic applies. Ed Thompson on the Montclair Campus finds personal communication crucial. "I find out who the people are who talk a lot. If you're instinctive at all, you will pick up on the vibes of things and find out who people are." Department chairs and directors feel an even greater need to get information directly from the best sources. While all levels refer to the formal lines of communication, middle managers sense the need for better or more timely information. Reliance on the grapevine is often more important here. John Shafer relies on the grapevine, particularly as an off-campus director. He talks to people in key positions, people who have been around a long time, people he knows he can trust. Reliance on a network of trusted allies within the college has become particularly important in recent years. As the focus of the college has shifted during Dr. Myers' tenure, Shafer has found himself increasingly vulnerable. This vulnerability has forced heavy reliance on an internal network of political confidants.

Department chairs dislike the necessity of dealing with gossip and coffee lounge criticism, yet they recognize the importance of this vehicle. Dr. Dreyfus, a Biggs Campus chair, notes that he is "not an informal networker; I don't go to the coffee lounge," but he is also clear that when he needs information, he will go directly to the source. Ed Thompson has found a comfortable balance between networking and his job.

> I guess you have to do a lot of schmoozing. I tend to do less of that. I should probably do more, but I just find it much easier to just come in here and work and rely on people around me who are bigger schmoozers than I am to keep me informed.

Thompson's colleagues share his understanding of the balance necessary between personal contact and the paperwork demands on administrators. The paperwork

> will always be here. . . . It's the people things, the things that go on organizationally that are the most important. It is the direct communication that allows you to filter the trivial from the important and buffers against the potential arrogance or distance of the written word.

Communication for faculty falls pretty much into the same categories. The formal lines of communication are in place to move information up and down the organization. Most faculty not only know the formal channels, but they refer to them with a clear sense of the relationships and the order. Faculty understand that access to information organizationally is through minutes, bulletins, departmental meetings, committees, and the faculty senate. Yet they also are familiar with the informal linkages. They will seek out information from the source, and many understand that in getting reliable information who you know and what you know is more important than the formal structure.

Faculty have an impact formally through committees and the senate, and informally through personal recommendations. Some faculty remain outside this network while others attempt to make an impact. "Even if you're not actually involved in the committee structure itself, I think a normal faculty member has input, and we don't all live in Cinderella's castle." This is based, according to Carl Webster, on the administrative approach of gathering data from the grassroots prior to decision making. Webster, a Biggs Campus faculty member, recognizes the various channels as well as the minutes and the memos. Yet he knows "the rumor mill works, and everyone knows that it's used strategically, so both ends of the grapevine know why they heard this stuff." The department or grassroots level to Webster is crucial to communication, and this connection is uneven. Some chairs are more open, others more authoritarian. Faculty without access to communication through the chair can access the senate formally or informally. There is "always the informal network that's out there that somebody tells someone at the senate." Access is also possible through a suggestion box for the truly faint of heart.

Senators are virtually unanimous as to their active and effective role in communication. Mary Victor feels she has "input and I feel it's a two-way street." She is free to break the formal lines in the hierarchy and can go directly to the campus provost or the college-wide vice presidents if she has an issue or a concern. Webster concurs in this analysis. He has direct access all the way to the president. While he is still active in the senate, he is not sure that his access isn't tied to his former campus role as senate president. In explaining his impact, he suggests, "Maybe they don't know I'm not a president anymore." Of course, the broadest influence is through the senate itself. Thomas Madagan believes that while the president is certainly capable of saying no, "he seems to value our concerns and our positions." As to why he might value senate opinions, Madagan has "always assumed that he thought it was just pragmatic to have goodwill and good morale."

While communication networks at Metro reflect the political underpinnings of the institution, program review also highlights these forces while simultaneously focusing attention on the anarchic characterisitcs of communication at the college. Program review as implemented at Metro demonstrates that the state policy does not penetrate deeply into the organization. While the college has an office and an administrator assigned with program review responsibility, it is clear that neither the policy nor the procedures utilized are well articulated across all areas of the college. It is also clear that campus based reviews are not done for decision purposes, but merely to meet the reporting requirements of the state. When program decisions are to be made the college follows its own internal productivity analysis which is not linked directly or indirectly to state-mandated program review.

Communication about program review is limited. Clark Reynolds, for example, is not aware of the goals of program review and overall notes that

> I don't really get involved with nor do I hear a lot of people talking about the importance of program review in A.S. degrees. Either we're doing things well or it's just not that

> high a priority at the college. Perhaps if we were in serious trouble it would be a bigger issue.

Part of the communication limitations are due to the fact that the college has no formal written procedure for campus level reviews. Terrance Stevens, who has overall responsibility for the process, says

> It sort of ended up being my responsibility to oversee reviews, and I guess I ended up developing the procedures. I don't have written procedures . . . it's just become part of practice as far as the review process. I just don't know [where the procedures came from] to tell you the truth.

Stevens puts the process in perspective noting that when the college wants to make a decision it really doesn't rely on program review. Instead, an internally developed productivity model is the vehicle for decision making. In reflecting on the relative importance of each process, Stevens suggests that program review is more oriented to meet "credentialing" or "state certifying" mandates and therefore the productivity report is of more value in decision making.

> I think in productivity, you assume that all the other pieces are there, so the productivity is looked at regularly to see the impact of that program, knowing that the program review process is there and has met the credentials.

The college, however, does adhere to the state reporting system used to monitor college implementation of the state policy. All appropriate forms are filed and the college meets the required state deadlines. This does not, however, link with the internal communication system nor does it enhance general knowledge. Louis McFall expressed confusion about program review, suggesting that, "I don't even know the language, but I'm sure it will be lofty." Ed Thompson, also has limited knowledge and experience with program review. He has been involved with state level studies, but he states

> Let me tell you what my involvement in program review is. It's not program review. I've had information given to me about program review of vocational programs. We've not

> gone through one of those in my department. I am involved at the state level on level three program review.

Another faculty member who has been through program review is unclear about how it all fits together. As to program review data,

> I know it exists [but] we receive so much data. I can't tell you the last time I saw it, but I'm sure I've seen it.
>
> I'm not being very helpful. I'm just so foggy on it. We strive to keep our program right up there, so in working with the data our main input is putting out the product . . . and keeping our state board scores high.

Over the past decade Metro has repeatedly reviewed one program, Pharmacy Technology. The activity surrounding this program reflects the communication and decision patterns of the college program review process. During the ten years that the reviews were conducted, the college consistently avoided a direct link with the state-mandated Level II process. While the college reported to the state that the program had been reviewed, it never indicated the possibility of closure or that specific corrective measures would be taken. All appropriate state bureaucratic procedures and time lines were addressed but without an intentional link between policy, process and internal activity. Metropolitan thus used the state-mandated process as a buffer for internal activity and relied on the logic of confidence to protect technical activity.

Internally, communication and decision patterns surrounding the pharmacy program differed sharply from the external bureaucratic pattern. An analysis of memoranda exchanged over a ten-year period reflects characteristics that are bureaucratic, political and anarchic. Generally, correspondence within administrative circles was bureaucratic. Communication followed the chain of command with a strong emphasis on structured, directive language. Production and efficiency were the dominant themes in these memoranda.

At the faculty level, however, memoranda were more political in nature. There was a strong emphasis on engaging constituents external to the organization and linking their interests to those of the program and the college. Efforts were made to introduce these organizations and their constituents directly into the internal decision process. Where order and structure dominated senior level administrative correspondence, faculty and even department level administrators stressed alternatives, negotiation and compromise. Where administrative memoranda closely followed the organizational hierarchy, faculty memoranda engaged no fewer than nine separate levels of the organization in attempts to enlist support.

At the point of decision, after ten years of discussion and debate, the tone and tenor of communication became increasingly conflictual. A flash point was reached when a faculty member appealed directly to the president for his assistance in the process. The campus administrator circumvented in this direct appeal immediately threatened sanctions against the faculty member for violating the chain of command. The faculty response was to threaten libel action and simultaneously continue her efforts to obtain presidential support. While the president did not openly side with the faculty member and did, in fact, decide to close the program, he also reassigned the campus administrator involved in the dispute.

This prolonged internal process highlights several factors. The college approach to program review reflects a desire to satisfy state "certification" of program review while simultaneously allowing the college to establish its own standards and procedures for program evaluation. Program review thus becomes a process to maintain external legitimacy while protecting internal choice over program alterations.

It also highlights the hybrid nature of the governance and decision-making process. Faculty in this case acted autonomously with few constraints or sanctions, while seeking to obtain political advantage and avoid the bureaucratic demands of the administration.

CONCLUSION

Communication patterns at Urban Community College and Metropolitan Community College reflect the hybrid nature of community college governance. While one might easily view their respective organization charts and the formal communication hierarchies as bureaucratic, a richer analysis of these patterns reveals significant political undercurrents and elements of anarchy.

Each college maintains a formal communication structure through which a variety of councils share information. In-house publications provide formal information links up and down the organization. This formal, bureaucratic image is also reflected in college responses to state-mandated program review. It is a vertical process in which information and data flow up and occasional directives move down from the state to the college. Letters and memoranda exhibit a strong and persistent reliance on rules, regulations, procedures and time lines.

Beneath this surface structure, communication becomes less bureaucratic and takes on political and anarchic characteristics. There is no strong relationship between position and authority in communication. Whom you know, what you know and your ability to share information with key decision makers is more important than position, rank or title. Linkages based on personal friendship are more valuable than position in the organizational hierarchy. Symbolic behavior and communication replace substantial action and serve more to protect internal options than to address external concerns.

At Urban Community College communication reflects the political ramifications of the power struggle between the administration and the faculty union. Administrative efforts

to control and manipulate internal communication are matched by union efforts to involve external constituencies, including state officials, in the struggle.

The inability of the administration to control communication through the formal hierarchy is demonstrated in several ways. Administrators themselves gather and share information informally to ensure their effectiveness in the organization. Some campus level administrators must negotiate between senior, district administration and the faculty in order to maintain their precarious balance in the organization structure. The attempt to control communication creates a high level of conflict which, in turn, interrupts the vertical flow of information. Over the past decade conflict has become a normal environmental factor within the college.

Communication at Metro is loosely connected. The formal channels are available but they are not used to move important information or to make key decisions. Administrators "dip down" into all levels of the organization to obtain information prior to decision making. "Trial balloons" are floated to ascertain the political consequences prior to a formal decision. The faculty senate serves less as a formal faculty body deliberating over important academic and instructional issues and more as a sounding board for the president to test alternatives and informally negotiate key decisions.

The use of sarcasm by faculty and administrators, the fact that faculty do not adhere to the hierarchical order of the organization, and the inclusion of groups external to the college in internal debate suggest a political model. The absence of overt conflict which might suggest a bureaucratic organization may, in fact, be more of a reflection of the successful political manipulation of the organization.

In the context of program review, communication at both institutions does not follow clear, well-articulated paths. Communication is uneven and, in fact, is impeded by

college efforts to protect its internal technology. Emphasis is on the appearance of compliance rather than on a thorough analysis of program performance.

This study suggests that a more comprehensive application of the framework to both institutions might well produce a far more accurate and more complex image of governance and decision making in two-year colleges.

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